The New Master of Wizard's Chess:
The Real Hugo Chavez and Asymmetric Warfare

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BEGINNING WITH the election of Hugo Chavez Frias as President of Venezuela in 1998, the United States and Venezuela have exchanged a continuous series of acrimonious charges and countercharges. Each country has repeatedly argued that the other is engaged in a political, economic, military struggle for Western Hemisphere hegemony. Relatively recently, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs Roger Noriega called on the Organization of American States (OAS) to strengthen its Carta Democratica (Democratic Charter) mechanisms to deal more effectively with threats to democracy, stability, and peace in Latin America.[1] In that connection, in testimony before the U.S. Congress in January 2005, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice argued that Chavez was minimizing democracy in Venezuela and destabilizing security in the Latin American region.[2] Subsequently, the U.S. Department of Defense supported those arguments and added its concern regarding Venezuelan purchases of large quantities of arms. Then, in February 2005, CIA Director Porter Goss put Venezuela at the top of the list of Latin American countries described as "areas of concern" with the potential of playing a destabilizing role in the region.[3] And, again, in May and June 2005 respectively, Noriega and Rice proposed the creation of a mechanism in the OAS that would monitor the quality of democracy and the exercise of power in Latin America.[4]

Chavez responded to these and similar allegations by saying, "The only destabilizing factor here [in Venezuela] is [U.S. President George W.] Bush."[5] In March, he repeated a familiar theme—that the United States intends to assassinate him and prayed God "save us" from Bush and to "save the world from the true threat [the U.S. Colossus of the North]."[6] Chavez argued also that the intent of his actions was simply to defend the sovereignty and greatness of his country and the region.[7] It is in the context of defending sovereignty and greatness that Chavez consistently returns to the idea of a "Bolivarian Revolution" (bolivarianismo) that is intended to develop the potential of Latin America to achieve Simon Bolivar's dream of South American political-economic integration and grandeza, to reduce U.S. hegemony in the region, and to change the geopolitical map of the Western Hemisphere.[8] In that connection, in April 2005, *The Economist* reported that Chavez had met with Cuba's Fidel Castro and, among other things, proclaimed a 21st-Century socialist "alternative" to U.S.-style capitalism in the Americas.[9]

Who is this man, Hugo Chavez? How can the innumerable charges and countercharges between the Venezuelan and U.S. governments be interpreted? What are the implications for democracy and stability in Latin America? In an attempt to answer these and related questions, we center our analysis on the contemporary geopolitical conflict context of current Venezuelan "Bolivarian" policy. To accomplish this, a basic understanding of the historical, political, and institutional context within which national security policy is generated is an essential first step toward understanding the situation as a whole. Then, a "levels of analysis" approach will provide a systematic understanding of how geopolitical conflict options have a critical influence on the logic that determines how such a policy as bolivarianismo might be implemented in the contemporary world security arena. This is the point from which we can generate strategic-level

recommendations for maintaining and enhancing stability in Latin America.[10]

The Political-Historical Context

Caudillos (strong men)—including "The Liberator," Simon Bolivar, himself—dominated Venezuela in a succession of military dictatorships from Independence to 1958. During that period of over 100 years, more than 20 constitutions were drafted, promulgated, and ignored. More than 50 armed revolts took their toll of life and property. Political parties meant little, and political principles even less. In all, the nation exhibited the characteristics of a traditional authoritarian and agricultural society—until the oil industry began to boom after World War II.[11]

From World War II to democracy. The modern political forces set in motion by a robust oil economy produced an experiment in democracy that was tempered by a strong centralized government. That government included a corporatist executive authority and security apparatus organized to direct and control the political and economic life of the country.[12] Then, beginning with the elections of 1958, there was a commitment to democracy, but that concept of democracy was not derived from the Anglo-American tradition of limited state power and strong individual human rights. Rather, the current tradition of Venezuelan democracy stems from a perversion of the Rousseauian concept of "total" (totalitarian) democracy, wherein the individual surrenders his rights and personal interests to the state in return for the strict enforcement of social harmony and the General Will.[13] In this context, the Venezuelan political system has been built on a pact among members of the elites, under which the dominant political parties and their caudillo-istic leaders have been the principal actors. At the same time, the Venezuelan state controls the wealth produced by its petroleum and other industries and is the principal distributor of the surpluses generated in a regulated and subsidized economy. Thus, to one extent or another, everybody and everything in Venezuela feed off of what has been called the piñata of the state treasury.[14]

The post-1992 "crisis of governance." The political, economic, and social turmoil that has surrounded Chavez and his Bolivarian Revolution since his nearly successful military coup in February 1992 to the present is instructive. The imprisonment of then Lieutenant Colonel Chavez for his role in the 1992 coup attempt, his subsequent release, his overwhelming victory in gaining the Presidency of the Republic in 1998, the riots and near overthrow of his government in 2002, the referendum of 2004 that confirmed him in office, and his expected success in the 2006 elections dramatically illustrate a struggle for reform and an expression of popular frustration with the failures of "democratically elected" governments.[15] Those governments were supposed to move Venezuela to a more open polity, economic development, civil peace, and individual prosperity. Instead, they stagnated and remained as closed as ever. Development failed to take place, political turmoil and limited violence prevailed, and ordinary people continued to live in relative poverty. In that environment, corporatism, crony capitalism, and authoritarianism grew—along with a widespread disillusionment with "democracy."[16]

The post-1992 "crisis of governance" in which the state was unable or unwilling to provide for the legitimate needs and desires of the Venezuelan people "opened the doors of power to the left" and to caudillo-istic populists such as Chavez who "reinforce their radical positions by inflaming anti-U.S. sentiment."[17] Subsequently, several other issues have been exposed that relate closely to Hemispheric stability and civil-military relations. We will examine only two of those issues: the Venezuelan reaction to "globalization" and the issue of governance and the role of the armed forces.

Globalization. In addition to the U.S. policy of "democratic enlargement" in Latin America, globalization is making people focus on the concept of transparent, accountable democracy. The rapid changes in the world since the end of the Cold War have challenged traditional closed political practices, social structures, cultural mores, and business practices. As a result, global economic integration has not only fostered great wealth, but also great disruption and dislocation—and political instability within elites and the masses.[18]

Like all revolutions, globalization represents a shift of power from one group to another. In most countries, including Venezuela, it involves a possible power shift from the state and its bureaucrats to the private sector and its entrepreneurs. As this happens, all those who receive their income and status from positions in governing political institutions—or subsidies from the governmental piñata—have two choices: They can become winners, if they take some chances in adapting to the global world, or they can become losers, if they do not further entrench themselves in the highly regulated, guaranteed economy. This includes managers and cronies who have been awarded monopolies by the state and ordinary people who rely on the state for cheap gas, foodstuffs, and other consumer goods.[19]

As a consequence, globalization also means possible fundamental change in the quality of life for important sectors of the society and possible social disintegration as various sectors contend with each other in the very personal struggle for survival in an uncertain society. At the same time, this struggle between those sectors who would and would not take the chances involved in changing the basic economic status quo means a possible dilemma for the Armed Forces. This issue and the one below center on the fact that many poorer Venezuelans see Chavez as their savior and champion in an impoverished and failing country. Other Venezuelans—especially from the fast-shrinking middle classes—see Chavez as an altogether more sinister figure. They see him replacing democracy with autocracy and a mildly socialistic economy with something close to communism.[20]

Governance and the role of the Armed Forces. Whether or not the new globalization rules are unacceptably oppressive and socially disintegrating depends very much on how they are made and enforced. Whether or not governance generates a transparent and viable political competence that can and will manage, coordinate, and maintain social harmony and national well-being depends, again, on how the rules are made and enforced. This takes us to the idea of responsible governance and the role of the Armed Forces in Venezuelan politics.

We must remember that the Venezuelan Armed Forces governed the country during the 19th century and through the first half of the 20th century. Since 1958 there has been a redefinition of the role of the Armed Forces to the benefit of responsible democratic influences. That redefinition and transition is, of course, not yet complete. The situation is delicate, and factors that nourish political upheaval and the Armed Forces' involvement are latent. Thus, it is possible that the military could resume a major role in the 21st-century political process.[21]

In that connection, Venezuelan Armed Forces have always assumed that they have an obligation to resolve various internal crises. That is, if a governing regime deviates too significantly from the Armed Forces' doctrinal concept of social harmony and good of the state, the military will step into the political situation and provide corrective action. As a result, the military institution will have a role in the political process. That role might be either positive or negative—depending on how Chavez involves the Armed Forces in the security decision-making and implementing processes.[22]

Venezuelan security policy. This takes us back to two questions asked earlier: Who is Hugo Chavez, and given the political-historical context within which Chavez is pursuing bolivarianismo, what are the implications for democracy and stability in Venezuela and the rest of Latin America? Brazil's former president, Fernando Henrique Cardoso, draws from his personal experience and succinctly states his view of Chavez and the challenges to Venezuela's and Latin America's democracies in the following terms: "Chavez is in essence the reincarnation of the old *caudillo*. He is populist and salvationist. In this sense, he is very different from Lula (the current Brazilian President, Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva). Lula is not interested in saving the world [and] Lula has no revolutionary agenda for Brazil or the world. Chavez, in contrast, does have a revolutionary agenda. The problem is that he does not exactly know what it is. It exists only as a slogan called *bolivarianism*, which means nothing and serves only as a base to throw Venezuela's future out the window.

"Nothing has changed with Chavez. The country remains basically what it always has been. Venezuela continues to be ruled by a parasitic dominant class dependent on oil. [Most] of the people [are] being fooled, but remain as excluded as ever.

"Ultimately, the vitality of Latin America's democracies will depend on . . . the willingness of those who believe in the universal values of liberty to remain vigilant and act decisively against the totalitarian temptations that continue to impoverish the quality of political life and promote the politics of false hopes. This means combating *caudillismo* in Venezuela . . . and political incompetence in the entire region."[23]

This is the reality and the basis of the political-historical context of Venezuelan security policy. It is the starting point from which to understand specific instances and develop strategies and principles of action that would either support or attempt to counter Venezuelan policy: It is two sides of the same proverbial coin.

The Venezuelan and Hemispheric Stability-Security Problem

The Western mainstream's legally oriented, "Westphalian" security dialog demonstrates that many political and military leaders and scholars of international relations have not yet adjusted to the reality that internal and transnational nonstate actors can be as important as traditional nation-states in determining global political patterns and outcomes in world affairs.[24] Similarly, many political and military leaders see nonstate actors as bit players in the international security arena. At most, many consider nontraditional actors to

be low-level law-enforcement problems, and, as a result, many argue that these political actors do not require sustained national security policy attention.[25] Yet, more than half the countries in the world are struggling to maintain their political, economic, and territorial integrity in the face of diverse direct and indirect nonstate and internal and transnational challenges.[26]

Thus, a more realistic contemporary nontraditional security dialog tends to focus on enhancing real and popular perceptions of relative stability and well-being. Stability and well-being tend to refer to the use of a variety of means—only one of which is specifically military—in the pursuit of national and regional security-stability objectives. In turn, enemies can be traditional nation-states, nontraditional external nonstate actors, violent nontraditional intrastate actors, or proxies or surrogates that might threaten the achievement of those objectives and the vitality of the state. Also, the security dialog in Latin America and much of the rest of the world defines poverty as an enemy and a threat to national and international stability and security. As a result, the enemy is not necessarily a recognizable military entity and might not have an industrial/technical capability to make war. At base, the enemy becomes the political actor who plans and implements violence that threatens national well-being and exploits instability.[27]

The major trend that permeates the security dialog is a slow, generalized move away from the previously dominant traditional-legal concept of national security and sovereignty toward a "full spectrum" of closely related national, subnational, and individual political-military and socioeconomic security threats. These threats can lead to radical political change or the failure of the traditional nation-state. The recognized interdependence of each component of the threat spectrum provides the point from which to develop a strategic vision to escape the intellectual viselock of the traditional-legal (Westphalian) definition of national security and sovereignty.[28]

In that connection, understanding the components of the spectrum as a holistic conceptual framework provides a more complete vision of the conflict arena and a more substantive comprehension of fourth-generation conflict. The logic of the situation further demonstrates that the conscious choices that the international community and individual nation-states make about how to deal with the broader, more realistic concept of threat will define the processes of national, regional, and global security and well-being for now and well into the future.[29]

Perspectives on threats. It will be helpful to consider the complex contemporary security environment with reference to three different levels of analysis—each with a regional (Latin American) corollary oriented toward countering a *possible* Venezuelan threat. From that point, we can examine fourth-generation asymmetric conflict and its implications.

The first level of analysis. This is a more or less traditional-legal level of analysis at the nation-state level that involves the potential threat of conventional interstate war. For example, Chavez has recently defined Colombia as Venezuela's most critical external threat.[30] In addition, although remote, an undeniable possibility of interstate war (based on old territorial quarrels) exists between Venezuela and Colombia and between Venezuela and Guyana.[31]

The corollary concerns the possibility of Venezuelan support to radical populist movements in various Latin American states—and resultant bilateral and multilateral tensions. The corollary also concerns the traditional principle of nonintervention. Simply put, the question is: How should we respond to a country that is helping destabilize its neighbors? The implications are enormous. Under the Westphalian concept of national security and sovereignty, there is no aggression unless it is blatantly obvious, or can be proved legally, that uniformed forces of one country have forcefully moved into the national territory of another. Now, we understand that an aggressor might not necessarily be a recognized military entity. The enemy could now become the state or nonstate actor that plans and implements the kind of direct or indirect, lethal or nonlethal, military or nonmilitary activity that subverts stability in other countries. The associated question for the Hemisphere is: How do we operationalize a rule-based system and make multilateral security a reality?

The second level of analysis. The second level of analysis is that of subnational-level threats to stability and sovereignty (effective control over what occurs within a given national territory). Elements operating within a state, as well as those operating between states, might generate subnational threats, which might also be considered transnational threats. Examples include, but are not limited to, terrorists, insurgents, narcotraffickers and other organized criminals, populists, warlords, and gangs. The threat in any case involves the intent to either politically control a targeted government or to radically change or destroy a given nation-state. In these terms, a nonstate actor can do what has already been done in at least two Mexican states

and one Brazilian state. That is, "If the irregular attacker—terrorists, drug cartels, criminal gangs, militant religious fundamentalists, or a combination of such nonstate actors—blends crime, terrorism, and war, he can extend his already significant influence. After embracing advanced weaponry, including weapons of mass destruction (and/or chemical and biological agents), radio frequency weapons, and advanced intelligence-gathering technology, along with more common weapons systems and technology, the attacker can transcend drug running, robbery, kidnapping, and murder and pose a significant challenge to the nation-state and its institutions.

"Then, using complicity, intimidation, corruption, and indifference, the irregular attacker can quietly and subtly co-opt individual politicians and bureaucrats and gain political control of a given geographical or political enclave. Such corruption and distortion can potentially lead to the emergence of a network of government protection of illicit activities, and the emergence of a virtual criminal state or political entity. A series of networked enclaves could, then, become a dominant political actor within a state or group of states. Thus, rather than violently competing with a nation-state, an irregular attacker can criminally co-opt and seize control of the state."[32]

Also, it is important to note that this second level of analysis would include proxies or surrogates of other countries. Many of the "Wars of National Liberation" that were fought all over the world during the so-called Cold War are good examples of this phenomenon. In this context, it is important to note that, at a forum on fourth-generation warfare and asymmetric war, Chavez directed the Armed Forces to develop a new Venezuelan military doctrine for contemporary conflict: "I call upon everybody to start an . . . effort to apprehend . . . the ideas, concepts, and doctrine of asymmetric war."[33] This move would prepare the way for Venezuela to use all available networks—political, economic, social, informational, and military—to convince a targeted government's (enemy's) decisionmakers and population that their present political situation is not legitimate and is hopeless.[34] Thus, it would be only a matter of time before the Bolivarian Revolution prevails.

The corollary has to do with the possibility of Venezuela helping to destabilize large chunks of Latin America by funneling money and other support to various nonstate actors. More specifically, one should consider the ramifications for stability and security given the possibility of Venezuelan money, technology, and arms being provided to radical movements and insurgent groups throughout Central and South America. Probably the most salient example of regional destabilization would be the possibility of Venezuelan support to the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). And, the question that plagued the West and its relations with the Soviet Union and China during the Cold War, and continues into this contemporary situation, is: How do we respond to a country that might be helping to change others through revolutionary means? Also, How do we respond to a country that is helping legal political parties or movements—such as Nicaraguan Sandinistas and Bolivian and Ecuadorian populists—operating in democracies? A closely associated question is: What are the most effective means to help a country targeted for bolivarianismo resist the revolutionary appeal?

The implications at this second level of analysis are daunting. Given the interrelated, multidimensional, multiorganizational, and multinational nature of contemporary conflict, security and stability are too big and too important to remain relegated to either the military or the police of a single nation. It is a nation-state problem, and all the instruments of state power must address it in a unified manner. At the same time, most subnational threats to security and sovereignty are supported by transnational actions. Transnational threats require transnational (multilateral) responses. Thus, a targeted nation's security and stability is also a problem for regional and global communities. Another highly relevant question concerning Hemispheric security is: How can the nation-state and the multilateral community, together, generate a combination of military, law-enforcement, intelligence, legal, informational, and moral capabilities adequate to combat contemporary asymmetric or fourth-generation threats?

The third level of analysis. The third level of analysis involves the personal security and well-being of the individual citizen. It then extends to protection of the entire population from violent internal nonstate actors and external enemies—and perhaps in some cases, from repressive internal (local and regional) governments. The individual security problem ends with the establishment of perceived firm but fair control of the entire national territory and the people in it. In these terms, it is helpful to think of human perpetrators of insecurity and violence as tertiary threats to individual security. Root causes (poverty, lack of basic human services, and corrupt, underperforming, or nonexistent government security institutions within the national territory) must be recognized as secondary threats. The inability or unwillingness of government to

address secondary and tertiary threats must be understood as the primary (the most fundamental) threat. As a result, strategic planners and decision-makers must contemplate all three levels of threat in dealing with individual security matters.[35]

Chavez understands all this. As a consequence, he has instituted socioeconomic and security programs to strengthen his personal position and power base. He is spending large amounts of money on an amorphous *Plan Bolivar 2000* that builds and renovates schools, clinics, day nurseries, roads, and housing for the poor. Chavez is also developing education and literacy outreach programs, agrarian reform programs, and workers cooperatives. At the same time, he has established MERCAL, a state company that provides subsidized staple foodstuffs to the poor. Last, Chavez has imported 16,000 Cuban doctors to help take care of the medical needs of the Venezuelan underclasses. Clearly, these socioeconomic programs offer tangible benefits to the mass of Venezuelans who were generally neglected by previous governments.[36]

Programs to enhance Venezuelan security and social harmony are numerous, ambitious, and vast. First, the 1999 Constitution provides political and institutional autonomy for the Armed Forces under the centralized control of the president and commander-in-chief. Chavez has also created an independent National Police Force responsible to the president outside the traditional control of the Armed Forces. At the same time, efforts have gone forward to establish a 1.5 million-person Military Reserve and two additional paramilitary organizations—the Frente Bolivariano de Liberacion (Bolivarian Liberation Front) and the Ejercito del Pueblo en Armas (Army of the People in Arms). The Armed Forces and the police perform traditional national defense and internal security missions within the context of preparing for fourth-generation conflict. The Military Reserve and the paramilitary are charged to protect the country from an American and/or Colombian invasion or resist such an invasion with an Iraqi-style insurgency, and to act as armed, anti-opposition forces.[37] The institutional separation of the various security organizations ensures that no one institution can control the others, but the centralization of those institutions under the president ensures his absolute control of personal security and "social harmony" in Venezuela. Finally, it is thought that the purchase of helicopters and 100,000 Kalashnikov rifles from Russia and transport aircraft and patrol boats from Spain will give Venezuelan security forces and their commander-in-chief unprecedented traditional and revolutionary capabilities.[38]

The corollary takes us back to the problems of assessing democracy and nonintervention and subnational, national, and regional instability in Venezuela and the Latin American region. Associated questions involve the circular nature of the interdependent relationship among personal and collective security, stability, development, peace, and democracy, and how to respond to those core human issues.

In the context of the Latin American security dialog, the most important implication of the third-level personal security component of the contemporary conflict spectrum is the issue of achieving balanced socioeconomic development with freedom and security. Experience worldwide and over time clearly indicates that a government's inability or unwillingness to perform its fundamental governance and personal security functions leads to failing- or failed-state status.[39] Many of the associated problems have their origins in weak or inadequate institutions that result in poor or thuggish responses to issues ranging from poverty to organized crime. Thus, the question is: How do we strengthen state institutions as they perform their legitimizing governance and security functions?

Conclusions. Chavez understands that conflict has changed. It is no longer limited to using military violence to bring about desired political change. Rather, all means that can be brought to bear on a given situation must be used to compel the enemy to acquiesce to one's will. Superior firepower is no panacea, and technology might not give one knowledge or information advantage. The astute warrior will tailor his campaign to the adversary's political-economic vulnerabilities and to his psychological perceptions. In short, it appears that Chavez is engaging in fourth-generation (asymmetric) conflict. At the same time, it appears that as an astute warrior he is prepared to "destroy in order to rebuild" in true revolutionary fashion.[40]

The Asymmetrical Challenge

Our examination of the three analytical levels of conflict indicates that interstate and intrastate wars include a full spectrum of very closely associated types of conflict. Thus, rather than considering each level of conflict as an independent form of warfare, it is more useful to think of them as parts within the concept of total war.[41] Moreover, two additional points are worth serious consideration. First, the various levels of conflict do not always follow each other in ascending or descending order. They often overlap in terms of time and place so that it is possible to have various levels of conflict going on at the same time. Second, even though

lower levels of military versus nonmilitary and lethal versus nonlethal means might be used in intrastate (substate) war, that does not mean that second- and third-level conflicts are any less a manifestation of war, than direct interstate war. As a consequence, it is important to consider and prepare for warfare as a whole; that is, considering warfare as the common denominator of the three analytical levels of conflict.[42] It is also helpful to think in terms of the sum of the whole being greater than its parts. Thus, now and in the future, the full spectrum of security threats might be seen in fourth-generation or asymmetric war.

Four generations of war. In addition to traditional interstate security issues, an array of nontraditional threats now challenges the global community at home and abroad. In this connection, there is only one governing rule for contemporary conflict: there are no rules; nothing is forbidden.[43] This is warfare in the age of globalization. While possibly less bloody, it is no less brutal. We can see these characteristics in a brief outline of what is more and more frequently being called first- through fourth-generation warfare methods.[44] It is important to note, also, that each generation or method of warfare is not completely different and separate from another. Each successive methodology builds on the previous one, and all overlap. Also, there is the "mix and match" of the past—plus other more contemporary knowledge-based and technical ingredients—that can produce what Qiao Liang and Wang Xiangsui call a "cocktail mixture."[45] This is important because what we outline below in terms of first- through fourth-generation conflict is over-generalized for the sake of simplicity and brevity. Thus, the cocktail-mix concept is an attempt to demonstrate the complexity, flexibility, and lethality of fourth-generation (asymmetric) warfare.

First through third-generation conflict. First-generation war is characterized by the low-tech attrition war that has been the principal means of conducting conflict from the beginning of time. The basic idea is that the more opponents killed or incapacitated relative to one's own side, the better. Historically, attrition war appears to serve only those protagonists with the largest numbers of human resources. When facing a numerically superior opponent, it has been important to find other means to compensate for numerical inferiority.[46]

Second-generation warfare was intended to provide the numerically inferior combatant with the means to out-perform his opponent. The basic concept is to employ surprise, speed, and lethality to bring pressure to bear on an enemy's weak spots. In essence, the military force that can "move, shoot, and communicate" more effectively relative to the opponent has the advantage and is more likely to prevail.[47] The German blitzkrieg of World War II and the American "shock and awe" approach in the Persian Gulf and Iraqi wars are examples of these methods and take us to the next generation of warfare.

Third-generation conflict moves from the blatant use of physical force toward the employment of brainpower to achieve success against an enemy. This entails a transition from hard to soft power. In addition to using first- and second-generation methods, third-generation conflict methodology tends to take advantage of intelligence, psychological operations, other knowledge-based means, and technologies as force multipliers. The basic intent of soft power is to provide more effective and efficient means than hard power through which to paralyze enemy action.[48] It should be noted that while soft brainpower is less bloody than the use of hard-power assets such as infantry, artillery, tanks, and aircraft, the ultimate objective of war remains the same: to force the enemy to accede to one's own interests.

Fourth-generation conflict. This is the methodology the weak employ against the strong. The primary characteristic is that of asymmetry, or the use of disparity between the contending parties to gain advantage. Strategic asymmetry has been defined as "acting, organizing, and thinking differently than opponents in order to maximize one's own advantages, exploit an opponent's weaknesses, attain the initiative, or gain greater freedom of action. It can have both psychological and physical dimensions."[49] This is a concept as old as war itself, but some military officers and political leaders do not like it. They argue that asymmetry is not the way "real soldiers" fight because they are not "fighting fair." This view is unfortunate. What many military and political leaders seem not to have learned about contemporary conflict is that terrorists, insurgents, drug traffickers, paramilitaries, and other nonstate and state actors, including Chavez, can be what Ralph Peters calls "wise competitors." Peters argues that "[w]ise competitors will not even attempt to defeat us on our terms; rather, they will seek to shift the playing field away from conventional military confrontations or turn to terrorism [or proxy war] or other nontraditional forms of assault on our national integrity. Only the foolish will fight fair."[50] Also, Colonel Thomas X. Hammes reminds us that fourth-generation war is the only kind of war the United States has ever lost.[51] Thus, what is required more than weaponry and technol-

ogy is lucid, incisive thinking, resourcefulness, determination, imagination, and a certain disregard for convention.

The cocktail-mix concept. Liang and Xiangsui explain that any number of completely different scenarios and actions can occur using a mix of the various generations or methods of conflict, along with a few well-chosen contemporary initiatives. To give the mind as much room as possible to contemplate the many possibilities and the seemingly lawless complexity of the cocktail-mix concept, we summarize the deadly game of "Wizard's Chess" as a metaphorical example of contemporary asymmetric conflict. It is instructive and sobering: "In that game, protagonists move pieces silently and subtly all over the game board. Under the players' studied direction, each piece represents a different type of direct and indirect power and might simultaneously conduct its lethal and nonlethal attacks from differing directions. Each piece shows no mercy against its foe and is prepared to sacrifice itself in order to allow another piece the opportunity to destroy or control an adversary—or checkmate the king. Over the long-term, however, this game is not a test of expertise in creating instability, conducting illegal violence, or achieving commercial, ideological, or moral satisfaction. Ultimately, it is an exercise in survival. Failure in Wizard's Chess is not an option."[52]

The challenge of asymmetrical war. Nontraditional interstate and intrastate conflicts will likely have different names, different motives, and exert different types and levels of violence. Nevertheless, whatever they are called, we can identify these unconventional wars by their ultimate objectives or by their results. That is, they are the organized application of coercive military or nonmilitary, lethal or nonlethal, direct or indirect, or a mix of all the above "unfair" methods, intended to resist, oppose, gain control of, or overthrow an existing government or symbol of power—and bring about fundamental political change.[53]

Conclusions. This takes us back to two questions asked in conjunction with the levels-of-analysis examination of the spectrum of conflict, including fourth-generation warfare. First, How can the charges and countercharges between the United States and Venezuela be interpreted? Second, What are the implications for democracy and stability in Latin America? Answers to these and implied questions might be found in the context of the type of conflict that Chavez appears to have chosen to wage in support of his Bolivarian Revolution. That type of conflict can be described as a mixture of first- through fourth-generation methods that integrate a full spectrum of first-, second-, and third-level analytical threats and is now being called fourth-generation, or asymmetric, war. And, to emphasize its deadly consequences, we have taken a page from a Harry Potter adventure and called it Wizard's Chess. But, regardless of what it is called, success in that kind of security arena requires a secure, harmonious internal base at the third level of analysis.

Lacking the conventional power to challenge the United States, or even any of his immediate neighbors, Chavez seems to have decided that asymmetric warfare is a logical means of expression and self-assertion. That is, this kind of holistic conflict is based on words, images, and ideas. It is about perceptions, beliefs, expectations, legitimacy, and the political will to attempt such an ill-defined revolutionary vision as bolivarianismo. And, the more messianic the vision, the more likely the leader and his followers will remain committed to the use of these political-psychological means. This kind of conflict is not won by militarily seizing specific territory or destroying specific buildings or cities. It is won by altering the political-psychological factors that are most relevant in a targeted culture.[54]

Consider the example of contemporary Bolivia. Over the past 5 years, that country has experienced a series of political-psychological crises in which three presidents have been undemocratically forced to leave office. Most recently, former President Carlos Mesa resigned to defuse large-scale protests organized by powerful populist groups and to avert what he saw as a possible civil war. Nevertheless, opposition leaders refused to allow the next two constitutionally designated individuals to assume the presidency. Agreement was finally reached when the third-in-line for the presidency—the president of the Supreme Court, Eduardo Rodriguez—agreed to call quick elections.[55] If Evo Morales and his Movement to Socialism happen to win that election as expected—or, following the pattern of imposition used to determine Mesa's replacement, impose a new president—what a coup it would be for his newest best friend, Hugo Chavez!

What happens is that populist leaders such as Morales, Chavez, and others exploit popular grievances to catapult themselves into political power—and stay there. Their success stems from solemn promises made directly to the masses to solve national and individual problems without regard to slow, obstructive, and corrupted democratic processes. Thus, through mass mobilization and supporting demonstrations and violence,

demagogic populist leaders are in a position to claim a mandate to place themselves above constitutions, legislatures, political parties, and courts—and govern as they see fit.[56]

This is the basis of the diplomatic charges and countercharges and is the answer to the question of democracy within the context of bolivarianismo. It is the starting point from which to understand where Chavez is going and how he expects to get there. It is the starting point from which to understand the side effects that will shape the security environment in which Latin America and the rest of the Hemisphere must struggle and survive. It is, also, the starting point from which to develop the strategic vision to counter radical populism and caudillismo and the instability and chaos they engender. Thus, Noriega might well be right when he argues that the diverse, myriad, nontraditional threats (toward which Chavez appears to be gravitating) can "challenge our democracies and undermine the security and prosperity of our citizens in too many of our states."[57]

Recommendations

Fourth-generation opponents are not invincible. They can be brought under control and defeated, but only by coherent, patient action that encompasses all agencies of a targeted government and its international allies. That kind of action would encompass the fields of politics, diplomacy, defense, intelligence, law enforcement, and economic and social development. These efforts must be organized as a network rather than in the traditional vertical bureaucracies of most governments. These efforts will require fundamental changes in how government leaders and personnel at all levels and across the board are trained, developed, promoted, deployed, and employed. Finally, this interagency and multilateral process must exert its collective influence for the entire duration of the conflict—from initial planning to the final achievement of a sustainable peace.[58]

The primary challenge, then, is to come to terms with the fact that there is a pressing need to shift from a singular military-police approach to a multidimensional and multinational paradigm, which, in turn, requires a conceptual framework and an organizational structure to promulgate unified civil-military planning and the implementation of transnational responses to transnational threats. Given today's realities, failure to prepare adequately for present and future asymmetric contingencies is unconscionable. At least five *fundamental* educational and organizational imperatives are needed to implement the challenges previously noted.

1. Civilian and military leaders at all levels must learn the fundamental nature of subversion and insurgency with particular reference to the way in which military and nonmilitary, lethal and nonlethal, and direct and indirect force can be employed to achieve political ends. Leaders must also understand the way in which political-psychological considerations affect the use of force—and the way in which force affects political-psychological efforts.

2. Civilian and military personnel are expected to be able to operate effectively and collegially in coalitions or multinational contingents. They must also acquire the ability to deal collegially with civilian populations and local and global media. As a consequence, efforts that enhance interagency as well as international cultural awareness—such as civilian and military exchange programs, language training programs, and combined (multinational) exercises—must be revitalized and expanded.

3. Leaders must learn that an intelligence capability several steps beyond the usual is required for fourth-generation wars. This capability involves active utilization of intelligence operations as a dominant element of both strategy and tactics.

4. Nonstate political actors in any kind of intrastate conflict are likely to have at their disposal an awesome array of conventional and unconventional technology and weaponry. The "savage wars of peace" have and will continue to place military forces and civilian support contingents in harm's way. Thus, leadership development must prepare "peacekeepers" to be effective warfighters.

5. Governments and international organizations (for example, the OAS) must restructure themselves to the extent necessary to establish the appropriate political mechanisms to achieve an effective unity of effort. The intent is to ensure that the application of the various civil-military instruments of power directly contributes to a mutually agreed political end state.

These challenges and tasks are the basic realities of 21st-century asymmetric conflict. The consequences of failing to take them seriously are clear. Unless our thinking, action, and organization are reoriented to deal with fourth-generation, knowledge-based informational and technological realities, the problems of global, regional, and subregional stability and security will resolve themselves—and not in a manner to anyone's liking. ***MR***

NOTES

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2. "Transcript: Day Two of Rice Testimony," *Washington Post,* 19 January 2005, on-line at <www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A21135-2005Jan19.html>, accessed 24 August 2005.
3. Roger Pardo-Maurer, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, interview by author, Washington, D.C., 2 February 2004; Radio Nacional de Venezuela, 17 February 2005.
4. Joel Brinkley, "U.S. Proposal in the O.A.S. Draws Fire as an Attack on Venezuela," *New York Times*, 22 May 2005; Condoleezza Rice, Secretary of State (remarks to the General Assembly of the Organization of American States, U.S. Department of State (DOS), Washington, D.C., 5 June 2005), on-line at <www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2005/47228.htm>, accessed 24 August 2005.
5. Hugo Chavez Frias, quoted in *El Universal*, Caracas, Venezuela, 25 February 2005; DOS, "Venezuela Playing 'Destabilizing Role' in Latin America," 31 March 2005.
6. Chavez, quoted in *Daily Times*, Salisbury, Maryland, 14 March 2005.
7. See the *Europa Press*, Madrid, Spain, 3 April 2005.
8. Radio Nacional de Venezuela, 27 and 28 September 2004; *El Universal*, 8 April 2005.
9. "Special Report: Hugo Chavez's Venezuela," *The Economist*, 14-20 May 2005, 25.
10. Marilee S. Grindle and John W. Thomas, *Public Choices and Policy Change* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991).
11. Hubert Herring, *A History of Latin America* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1972), 513-14. See also Winfield J. Burggraff, *The Venezuelan Armed Forces in Politics, 1935-1959* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1972).
12. For excellent discussions of general Latin American and specific Venezuelan corporate traditions, see *Authoritarianism and Corporatism in Latin America,* ed., Howard J. Wiarda (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2004). See also David J. Meyers, "Venezuela's Punto Fijo Party System," in *Wiarda*, 141-72; John V. Lombardi, *Venezuela: The Search for Order, the Dream of Progress* (England: Oxford University Press, 1982).
13. Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, eds., J.P. Mayer and Max Lerner (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1966), 213-26. See also Jean Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, trans., G.D.H. Cole (Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., 1952); John Locke, *Of Civil Government, Second Treatise of Civil Government* (New York: Gateway, n.d.).
14. Carlos Gueron, "Introduction," in *Venezuela in the Wake of Radical Reform,* ed., Joseph S. Tulchin (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1993), 1-3.
15. Ibid. See also Steve Ellner, "Revolutionary and Non-Revolutionary Paths of Radical Populism: Directions of the Chavez Movement in Venezuela," *Science and Society* (April 2005), 160-90.
16. Ibid. See also Francisco Rojas Aravena, "Una comunidad de seguridad en Las Americas: Una mirada a la Conferencia Especial de Seguridad" [A security community in the Americas: A look at the special security conference], *Foro* (November 2003): 10-15.
17. Alvaro Vargas Llosa, "The Return of Latin America's Left," *New York Times*, 22 March 2005. See also GEN James T. Hill, Commander, U.S. Southern Command (comments) in Rudi Williams, "SOUTHCOM Faces Threats to Peace in Latin America, Caribbean," American Forces Press Service, 31 March 2004.
18. Tom Friedman has written extensively and eloquently on globalization and its implications. See for example *The Lexus and the Olive Tree* (New York: Anchor Books, 1999). See also Alvin Toffler, *Power Shift* (New York: Bantam Books), 1990.
19. Ibid.
20. *The Economist,* 14-20 May 2005, 23-24.
21. Anonymous, interviews by author, Miami, Florida, 10 March 2005.
22. Ibid.
23. Paulo Sotereo, *O Estado de Sao Paulo,* quoting former-President Fernando Henrique Silva Cardozo, interview by the author, Washington, D.C., 17 February 2005.
24. The Western mainstream, legally-oriented "Westphalian" security dialog is based on the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia between the Holy Roman Emperor and the King of France and their respective allies.
25. Of note is some scholars and journalists are beginning to understand, and to say, that nontraditional political actors might not require sustained national security policy attention. See, as examples, Anthony T. Bryan, *Transnational Organized Crime: The Caribbean Context* (Miami, FL: The Dante B. Fascell North-South Center Press, University of Miami, 2002); Ivelaw Lloyd Griffith, *Drugs and Security in the Caribbean: Sovereignty under Siege* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997); and "El delito como una amenaza geopolitica" [Crime as a geopolitical threat], at <www.clarin.com/>, 3 July 2003. Related international-relations theory may be found in Barry Buzan, *People, States and Fear*, 2d ed. (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1991); Keith Krause and Michael C. Williams, eds., *Critical Security Studies* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997); Mohammed Ayoob, "Defining Security: A Subaltern Realist Perspective," in Krause and Williams, 121-46.
26. While one published map does not show many of the problems Kaplan points up, it does emphasize this particular point. See "World Conflict and Human Rights Map 2001/2002," prepared by the Interdisciplinary Research Program for the Institute for International Media and Conflict Research with the support of the Goals for Americans Foundation, St. Louis, Missouri, June 2003. Of note is the idea that internal and transnational nonstate actors can be as important as traditional nation-states in determining global political patterns and outcomes as articulated by Robert D. Kaplan in "The Coming Anarchy," *The Atlantic Monthly* (February 1994): 72-76, and in *The Coming Anarchy* (New York: Random House, 2000), 3-57.
27. As an example of this discussion, see Amos A. Jordan, William J. Taylor, Jr., and Michael J. Mazarr, *American National Security,* 5th ed. (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), 3-46. See also Frank N. Trager and Philip S. Kronenberg, eds., *National Security and American Society* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1973), 47; Lars Schoultz, *National Security and United States Policy toward Latin America* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1987), 143-330.
28. Consensus statement, Conference on Charting New Approaches to Defense and Security Challenges in the Western Hemisphere, co-sponsored by the Latin American and Caribbean Center of Florida International University and the Strategic Studies Institute (SSI) of the U.S. Army War College (AWC), Coral Gables, Florida, 9-11 March 2005.
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30. Andy Webb-Vidal, "Chavez threatens to cut all ties with Colombia," *Financial Times,* 24 January 2005. On-line at <http://news.ft.com/cms/s/1db6dd82-6e37-11d9-a60a-00000e2511c8.html>, accessed 21 September 2005.
31. Jack Child, *Geopolitics and Conflict in South America: Quarrels Among Neighbors* (New York: Praeger, 1985), 58-60.
32. Manwaring, *Street Gangs: The New Urban Insurgency* (Carlisle, PA: SSI, AWC, 2005), 17.
33. Hugo Chavez Frias's charge to the National Armed Force (FAN) to study the ideas, concepts, and doctrine of asymmetric warfare was made at the 1st Military Forum on Fourth-Generation War and Asymmetric War, Caracas, *El Universal*, 8 April 2005.
34. COL Thomas X. Hammes, U.S. Marine Corps, "4th-generation Warfare," *Armed Forces Journal* (November 2004): 40-44.
35. Consensus statement.
36. Interviews and *The Economist*.
37. Ibid.
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39. Daniel C. Esty, Jack Goldstone, Ted Robert Gurr, Barbara Harff, and Pamela T. Surko, "The State Failure Project: Early Warning Research for U.S. Foreign Policy Planning," in *Preventive Measures: Building Risk Assessment and Crisis Early Warning Systems,* eds., John L. Davies and Ted Robert Gurr (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 1998).
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43. Qiao Liang and Wang Xiangsui, *Unrestricted Warfare* (Beijing: PLA Literature and Arts Publishing House, 1999), 2.
44. The terms "first-, second-, and third-wave war" were popularized by Alvin and Heidi Toffler in *War and Anti-War: Survival at the Dawn of the 21st Century* (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 1993).
45. Liang and Xangsui, 48.
46. Tofflers, 33-37. See also Michael Howard, *The Lessons of History* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1991).
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50. Ralph Peters, "Constant Conflict," *Parameters* (Summer 1997): 10. See also "The Culture of Conflict," *Parameters* (Winter 1995-95): 18-27.
51. Hammes.
52. Manwaring, Conference.
53. Manwaring, *Gangs*, 8.
54. Steven Metz, "Relearning Counterinsurgency" (panel discussion, American Enterprise Institute, 10 January 2005). See also Paul E. Smith, *On Political War* (Washington, DC: National Defense University Press), 1989.
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57. Noriega, 28 October 2004.
58. Hammes.

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